

C) 2012--23



UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO
FACULTY OF MUSIC

2011-12 SEASON

Thursday, March 1, 2012
12:10 pm. Walter Hall

THURSDAYS AT NOON

A Dedication

Colleen Skull, soprano (*DMA Recital Competition Winner*)
Susan Ball, piano

PROGRAM

1 *Ah! Perfido...Per pieta, non dirmi addio!*

Ludwig van Beethoven
(1770-1827)

2 *Ach Lieb, ich muß nun scheiden, Op. 21, No. 3*

3 *Allerseelen, Op. 10, No. 8*

4 *Befreit, Op. 39, No. 4*

5 *Zueignung, Op. 10, No. 1*

Richard Georg Strauss
(1864-1949)

6 *Vignettes: Letters from George to Evelyn*

7 *From the private papers of a World War II Bride*

Alan Louis Smith
(b.1955)

8 *Tres poemas, Op. 81*

9 *Something from La forza del destino (Verdi) - Pace Pace*

Joaquín Turina
(1882-1949)

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Next on Thursdays at Noon

March 8, 2012

Five Clarinets - Four Hands

Clarinetists Richard Thomson and Stephen Pierre perform music by Mike Curtis, Poulenc, and Mendelssohn with pianist Lydia Wong and percussionist Mark Duggan.

A SPECIAL NOTE

This recital, *A Dedication*, is a celebration of the most influential people and experiences that have helped mould me into the musician, academic, researcher, and teacher I am today. As my time at the University of Toronto comes to a close, I wanted to take this wonderful opportunity to acknowledge my many colleagues; conductor, pianist, and coach, Martin Isepp; my grandparents, Tony and Jeannette Romanow; and my long time mentor, Mary Morrison, through the performance of some of the music about which I am most passionate.

My love for opera and art music continuously serves as a source of inspiration and purpose in my life and ultimately fuelled my decision to return to academia. My research examines a model of factors that contribute to the sustaining of performance excellence in elite opera. In recognition and admiration of my research participants and all of my colleagues who continue to inspire me, I dedicate this tour de force concert aria *Ah! Perfido... Per pietà, non dirmi addio! Op. 65*, by Ludwig van Beethoven.

The next selections are some of the most beloved Strauss lieder. It was with great sadness the opera and art song community lost the legend Martin Isepp this past Christmas. In remembrance and celebration of some of the most meaningful music making I have ever experienced, Susan and I dedicate this set to the incomparable Martin. His knowledge, talent, spirit, and influence will forever live in all whom he touched.

Following the Strauss is *Vignettes: Letters from George to Evelyn*, from the private papers of a World War II Bride, written by Alan Louis Smith in 2002. The text of this work is taken from the letters exchanged between Evelyn Semenza and George W. Honts during World War II. Evelyn married George in San Francisco on Christmas Eve of 1942. They spent one magical year together before George received his orders to be shipped overseas. After he left the United States for Europe, the couple never saw each other again. George was killed in March of 1945 by German gunfire along the Rhine River.

George and Evelyn's separation was not, of course, unusual. My own grandparents, Tony and Jeannette Romanow, also endured four years apart while my grandfather was overseas fighting in the war. It was during that time they wrote letters to each other every day which helped sustain their love for each other during the most difficult of circumstances—a love that lasted for more than sixty years. This set brings to life the tremendous love and array of emotions elicited between two people dedicated to one another throughout a life time and beyond and is performed in honour of T.R. and J.C. 19-1-46.

Coming full circle, I began my full-time music studies at the University of Toronto in the fall of 1998 as a student in the opera division. I was lucky enough to enter into the studio of Mary Morrison. Fourteen years later, Mary continues to be the most influential person in my continued development in all areas of my life. Mary is the epitome of everything I will ever hope to be and achieve, from her immense accomplishments as an artist, musician, teacher, mentor, friend, and surrogate mother. Mary is constantly thinking about her students and suggesting repertoire. One of her many suggestions to me was the *Tres poemas, op. 81* by Joaquín Turina. As many know, Mary has a tremendous ability of knowing just what repertoire suits her students. This one's for you Mary. Thank you.

TEXTS AND TRANSLATIONS

LUDWIG VAN BEETHOVEN (1770-1827)

Ah! Perfido... Per pietà, non dirmi addio! Op. 65

Ah! perfido, spergiuro,
Barbaro traditor, tu parti?
E son questi gl'ultimi tuoi congedi?
Ove s'intese tirannia più crudel?
Va, scellerato! va, pur fuggi da me,
L'ira de' numi non fuggirai.
Se v'è giustizia in ciel, se v'è pietà,
Congiureranno a gara tutti a punirti!
Ombra seguace, presente, ovunque vai,
Vedrò le mie vendette,
Io già le godo immaginando.
I fulmini ti veggo già balenar d'intorno.
Ah no! Fermate, vindici Dei!
Risparmiate quel cor, ferite il mio!
S'ei non è più qual era, son io qual fui,
Per lui vivea, voglio morir per lui!

Per pietà, non dirmi addio!
Di te priva che farò?
Tu lo sai, bell'idol mio!
Io d'affanno morirò.

Ah crudel! Tu vuoi ch'io mora!
Tu non hai pietà di me?
Perchè rendi a chi t'adora
Così barbara mercè?
Dite voi se in tanto affanno
Non son degna di pietà?

RICHARD STRAUSS (1864-1949)

*Ach Lieb, ich muß nun scheiden op. 21 no. 3 Alas, my love,
I must depart*

Text: Felix Ludwig Julius Dahn

Ach Lieb, ich muß nun scheiden,
gehn über Berg und Tal,
die Erlen und die Weiden,
die weinen allzumal.

Sie sahn so oft uns wandern
zusammen an Baches Rand,
das eine ohn' den andern
geht über ihren Verstand.

Die Erlen und die Weiden
vor Schmerz in Tränen stehn,
nun denket, wie uns beiden
erst muß zu Herzen gehn.

Ah! You treacherous, faithless,
barbaric traitor, you leave?
And is this your last farewell?
Where did one hear of a crueller tyranny?
Go, despicable man! Go, flee from me!
You won't flee from the wrath of the gods.
If there is justice in heaven, if there is pity,
all will join forces in a contest to punish you.
I follow your trail! I am wherever you go,
I will live to see my revenge,
I already take my delight in it in my imagination.
I already see you surrounded by flashes of lightning.
Alas! Pause, avenging gods!
Spare that heart, wound mine!
If he is not what he was, I am still what I was.
For him I lived, for him I want to die!

Have mercy, don't bid me farewell,
what shall I do without you?
You know it, my beloved idol!
I will die of grief.

Ah, cruel man! You want me to die!
Don't you have pity on me?
Why do you reward the one who adores you
in such a barbaric way?
Tell me, if in such a grief
I do not deserve pity?

Alas, my love, I must now part from you,
and go beyond the mountain and valley;
the alders and the willows
are weeping all the while.

They watched us wander so often
together by the edge of the brook;
the sight of one of us without the other
will surpass their understanding.

O alders and willows,
standing weeping with pain,
just think now how we
must feel in our hearts!

Allerseelen, op. 10, no. 8 All Soul's Day

Text: Hermann von Gilm zu Rosenegg

Stell auf den Tisch die duftenden Reseden,
Die letzten roten Asten trag herbei,
Und laß uns wieder von der Liebe reden,
Wie einst im Mai.

Gib mir die Hand, daß ich sie heimlich drücke
Und wenn man's sieht, mir ist es einerlei,
Gib mir nur einen deiner süßen Blicke,
Wie einst im Mai.

Es blüht und duftet heut auf jedem Grabe,
Ein Tag im Jahr ist ja den Toten frei,
Komm an mein Herz, daß ich dich wieder habe,
Wie einst im Mai.

Befreit, op. 39 Fünf Lieder no. 4 Freed

Text: Richard Fedor Leopold Dehmel

Du wirst nicht weinen. Leise, leise
wirst du lächeln: und wie zur Reise
geb' ich dir Blick und Kuß zurück.
Unsre lieben vier Wände! Du hast sie bereitet,
ich habe sie dir zur Welt geweitet
o Glück!

Dann wirst du heiß meine Hände fassen
und wirst mir deine Seele lassen,
läßt unsern Kindern mich zurück.
Du schenktest mir dein ganzes Leben,
ich will es ihnen wiedergeben
o Glück!

Es wird sehr bald sein, wir wissen's beide,
wir haben einander befreit vom Leide;
so gab ich dich der Welt zurück.
Dann wirst du mir nur noch im Traum erscheinen
und mich segnen und mit mir weinen
o Glück!

Place on the table the fragrant mignonettes,
Bring inside the last red asters,
and let us speak again of love,
as once we did in May.

Give me your hand, so that I can press it secretly;
and if someone sees us, it's all the same to me.
Just give me your sweet gaze,
as once you did in May.

Flowers adorn today each grave, sending off their
fragrances;
one day in the year are the dead free.
Come close to my heart, so that I can have you again,
as once I did in May.

You will not weep. Gently
you will smile, and as before a journey,
I will return your gaze and your kiss.
Our dear four walls you have helped build;
and I have now widened them for you into the world.
O joy!

Then you will warmly seize my hands
and you will leave me your soul,
leaving me behind for our children.
You gave me your entire life,
so I will give it again to them.
O joy!

It will be very soon, as we both know -
but we have freed each other from sorrow.
And so I return you to the world!
You will then appear to me only in dreams,
and bless me and weep with me.
O joy!

Zueignung, op. 10, no. 1 Dedication

Text: Acht Gedichte aus Letzte Blätter, von Hermann von Gilm

Ja, du weißt es, teure Seele,
Daß ich fern von dir mich quäle,
Liebe macht die Herzen krank,
Habe Dank.

Einst hielt ich, der Freiheit Zecher,
Hoch den Amethysten-Becher,
Und du segnetest den Trank,
Habe Dank.

Und beschworst darin die Bösen,
Bis ich, was ich nie gewesen,
Heilig, heilig an's Herz dir sank,
Habe Dank.

Yes, you know it, dearest soul,
How I suffer far from you,
Love makes the heart sick,
Have thanks.

Once I, drinker of freedom,
Held high the amethyst goblet,
And you blessed the drink,
Have thanks.

And you exorcised the evils in it,
Until I, as I had never been before,
Blessed, blessed sank upon your heart,
Have thanks.

ALAN LOUIS SMITH (B. 1955)

Vignettes: Letters from George to Evelyn (2002)

From the private papers of a World War II Bride

Evelyn Semenza married First Lieutenant George W. Honts in San Francisco on Christmas Eve of 1942. They spent one magical year together before George received his orders to be stationed in Europe. After he left the United States at Christmas of 1943 to be shipped overseas the couple never saw each other again. George was killed in March of 1945 by German gunfire along the Rhine River. He had participated in and survived the invasion of Normandy, D-Day. George and Evelyn exchanged beautiful letters, Evelyn preserved these letters which serves as the text for this song cycle.

Prologue
Dearest...
Darling...

1. Stationed in Europe:
Dec. '42 England

I had seen fire go through the young pines in drought season. But it was no more swift than passion's blaze through us. Our hearts were rejoined and we were in each other's arms. We were pitiful in the bliss and pain of it--so lavish were our loves so strong our need and right for each other and so vigorous and sentient our years.

You will remember won't you?

6 April '44 England
Good morning darling--

The sun has just come up. It's a beautiful morning. The grassy downs are sparkling like myriads of diamonds. Sheep are placidly grazing round my tent, satisfied with the prospect of getting both food and drink in the same mouthful and displaying their wooly youngsters with great pride. From the top of the hill the great sea is as quiet as a lake. The anchored hulls of all the cargo ships are quietly swaying to and fro keeping rhythm with gently swells that do not end in surf.

This morning my heart goes out to you.

Mar. 18 '45 Germany [Along the Rhine, 6 days before his death, from a letter to Evelyn's mother]

I am still the busiest guy in the seven armies and the days and the nights run together and melt with alarming speed. Still, each one that passes brings closer that time when my purgatory on earth shall be ended and I can enter into heaven through the portals of your two lovely arms.

Mar. 21st, '44 [before crossing the English Channel]
...the build up for the big push rapidly being completed.

II. Crossing the English Channel:

Mar. 10 '44 [In mid-Channel for 3 days]

I am the only officer aboard from my outfit---the boys are at a high pitch and primed for action.

I am not the big chap that you might have imagined... right now I feel very small and unfit, unequal to the job that is awaiting for me just beyond the horizon and I am guilty of hiding a great loneliness and not a little fear behind a demeanor of official bravado and I confess feeling very smug in your love. Shouldn't I feel more proud of attaining you than if I were the big, brave, invincible knight of your dreams?

III France, having survived the Normandy Invasion, D-Day:

France, Jul 2nd, '44

Down pour of rain--thunder--bombers--fighters--mud--shattered dwellings--dead livestock--uprooted trees--etc.

France 14 Oct. '44

The order of the day is mud--mud--mud Thin slippery mud, thick sticky mud, French mud, German mud--The rain is continuing down unabated and the channel is pounding at its cliff confines as though it were possesses of the devil himself.

France Nov. 22, '44

It is still inconceivable to me that you have chosen to share your life with me...a love that has given me new life, a new goal and a new approach to heaven.

IV Telegram-Schism

WESTERN UNION 1945 APR 2 PM 6 24

...TA84

T.WA291 31 GOVT= WASHINGTON DC 2 753P

[MRS EVELYN E HONTS=

141 VINE ST RENO NEV=]

THE SECRETARY OF WAR DESIRES TO EXPRESS HIS DEEP REGRET THAT YOUR HUSBAND
1LT HONTS GEORGE W WAS KILLED IN ACTION IN GERMANY 25 MAR 45 CONFIRMING LETTER
FOLLOWS=

JA ULIO THE ADJUTANT GENERAL

25 45.

EPILOGUE

My heart, my mind, my soul is yours--

Love me--

Love me--I adore you--

Love me too.

My best to everyone...

Must run now, my sweet--

Gotta run now baby,

Love, George

JOAQUÍN TURINA (1882-1949)

Tres Poemas

Olas gigantes, no. 1

Text: Gustavo Adolfo Bécquer from Rimas, No. 52

Olas gigantes que os rompéis bramando
En las playas desiertas y remotas,
Envuelto entre las sábanas de espuma,
¡Llevadme con vosotras!

Ráfagas de huracán, que arrebatáis
Del alto bosque las marchitas hojas,
Arrastrando en el ciego torbellino,
¡Llevadme con vosotras!

Nubes de tempestad que rompe el rayo
Y en fuego ornáis las desprendidas orlas,
Arrebatado entre la niebla oscura,
¡Llevadme con vosotras!

Llevadme, por piedad, a donde el vértigo
Con la razón me arranque la memoria.
¡Por piedad! ... ¡Tengo miedo de quedarme
Con mi dolor a solas, con mi dolor a solas

Tu pupila es azul, no. 2

Text: Gustavo Adolfo Bécquer from Rimas, No. 13

Tu pupila es azul y cuando ríes,
Su claridad suave me recuerda
El trémulo fulgor de la mañana
Que en el mar se refleja.

Te pupila es azul, y cuando lloras,
Las transparentes lágrimas en ella
Se me figuran gotas de rocío
Sobre una violeta.

Tu pupila es azul, y sien su fondo
Como un punto de luz radia una idea,
Me parece en el cielo de la tarde
¡Una perdida estrella!

Besa el aura, no. 3

Text: Gustavo Adolfo Bécquer from Rimas, No. 9

Besa el aura que gime blandamente
las leves ondas que jugando riza;
el sol besa a la nube en occidente
y de púrpura y oro la matiza;
la llama en derredor del tronco ardiente
por besar a otra llama se desliza;
y hasta el sauce, inclinándose a su peso,
al río que le besa vuelve un beso.

Gigantic waves who throw yourselves roaring
Onto the remote deserted beaches
Enveloped among blankets of foam,
Take me with you!

Blasts of the hurricane that tear
from the high woods the shrivelled leaves
Dragging them along in the blind whirlwind,
Take me with you!

Storm clouds broken by lightning
And decorating in fire the broken surf
Snatched from the dark mist
Take me with you!

Take me, for pity's sake, to where vertigo
can tear out memory and reason.
For pity's sake!...I am afraid to remain
Alone with my grief, alone with my grief!

How blue your eyes are, and when you laugh
How their soft clarity reminds me
Of the tremulous shine of morning
The sea reflects upon its waters.

How blue your eyes are, and when you cry
How the crystal tears that well up in them
seem to me the drops of dew
that collect upon a violet.

How blue your eyes are, and how their depths
can radiate an idea like a point of light,
How much they seem to me a lost star
In the evening sky! Oh!

He kisses the aura that wails mildly
the light waves that playing it curls;
the sun kisses to the cloud in the West
and with purple and gold it tints it;
the flame llama in contour of the ardent trunk
for kissing another flame ignites;
and up to the willow, bowing to their weight,
to the river that kisses him a kiss returns.

BIOGRAPHIES

COLLEEN SKULL, soprano

Soprano Colleen Skull has appeared with opera companies and orchestras across the country, including the Canadian Opera Company, Manitoba Opera, the Toronto Symphony Orchestra, Esprit Orchestra, Highlands Opera Studio, and many others. Described as having "real talent, boasting a voluptuous, weighty voice that oozes out of her" (*Winnipeg Free Press*), Ms Skull is a distinguished graduate of the Canadian Opera Company Ensemble Studio. Operatic roles include Wellgunde in *Gotterdammerung*, Waltraute in *Die Walküre*, Alice Ford in *Falstaff*, Fiordiligi in *Così fan tutte*, Agatha in *Der Freischütz*, Jocasta in *Oedipus Rex*, Lisa in *Pique Dame*, Liu in *Turandot*, Marina in *Boris Godunov*, and the title roles in *La Voix Humaine* and *Jenufa*.

Currently a Doctor of Musical Arts candidate in Voice Performance at the University of Toronto, Ms Skull recently won the Graduate Award from the International Symposium on Performance Science, at which she presented a keynote presentation; *Sustained excellence: Toward a model of factors sustaining elite performance in opera*, with a publication now available. Later this year she will present her research at the 52nd National NATS conference in Orlando, Florida. She has also won many awards and prizes including the Metropolitan Opera District Competition and a Chalmers Award, and has been generously funded by the Canada Council for the Arts.

Ms. Skull has recently been appointed the Director of the Highlands Opera Studio Community School providing vocal instruction to singers in the community as the beginning of a much greater local education initiative to spread the understanding of the many facets involved in performing, producing and presenting opera.

SUSAN BALL, piano

Pianist Susan Ball holds degrees from the University of Western Ontario and the University of Toronto. Additionally, she has participated in programs at the Banff Centre, AIMS in Graz, and the Tanglewood Music Centre. She was a member of the COC's Ensemble Studio in 2001-2002 and since then has been a regular member of the music staff. Susan has also worked at the Aberdeen Youth Festival, the Charley Creek Vocal Institute, Tapestry Opera, the Toronto Summer Music Festival, and the University of Toronto's Opera Division.